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C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 001765

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [CG](#)

SUBJECT: DRC VOTER REGISTRATION NEARS 17.5 MILLION

Classified By: PolOff CBrown, reasons 1.4 b/d.

1. (U) The Independent Election Commission (CEI) released October 18 its latest figures on voter registration in DRC, reporting that nearly 17.5 million people have enrolled for the Constitutional referendum currently scheduled for December 18. Almost one million people have registered in the past week. The numbers for each province are as follows: Kinshasa (2,963,101); Bas-Congo (1,232,416); Orientale (3,153,549); Katanaga (2,947,089); Kasai Occidental (1,684,277); Kasai Oriental (1,571,453); North Kivu (1,695,214); South Kivu (1,190,669); Maniema (431,229); Equateur (333,419); and Bandundu (292,462).

2. (SBU) CEI President Abbe Apollinaire Malu-Malu indicated on October 18 that enrollment centers in Equateur and Bandundu would remain open until the end of November, as logistical difficulties persist in opening centers throughout the two provinces. Enrollment centers in the two provinces began operating September 25, and had been scheduled to close by November 13. As of October 17, according to CEI figures, over 1,300 centers remain to be opened.

3. (C) Ambassador toured registration centers in Bandundu and Equateur October 15-16 with the International Committee to Accompany the Transition (CIAT). Ambassador noted, along with many others in the CIAT mission, that registration in urban areas appeared to be running well, but deployment of enrollment kits in rural locations remained problematic. Of particular concern was the weak leadership of CEI staff, who were unable to answer specific questions regarding plans and timetables for opening the remaining centers.

4. (SBU) Minister of Interior Theophile Mbemba, UN Special Representative of the Secretary General William Swing and Malu-Malu travel to Bandundu October 21 for a one-day trip to visit enrollment centers. Mbemba will return to Bandundu on October 23 for a week-long inspection of operations in the province, under instructions from President Joseph Kabila. Mbemba is also expected to spend the following week in Equateur doing the same.
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